Schlesinger man leaves DIA

WASHINGTON (AP) — Lt. Gen. Daniel O. Graham said Tuesday he is retiring as head of the Defense Intelligence Agency because "I'm a Schlesinger man."

Graham said he reached his decision Sunday night after hearing news reports that James R. Schlesinger had been ousted as secretary of defense. President Ford announced Schlesinger's removal Monday night.

"Nobody asked me to retire," Graham said in an interview. "I'm not the victim of any housecleaning."

He said the DIA has not come in for any major criticism in the course of House and Senate probes of misdeeds by the Central Intelligence Agency and other government intelligence organizations.

"It's rather dullsville over here," he said. "I don't have any covert operations or espionage."

The 50-year-old Army general, a long-time intelligence specialist, said, "I just have great loyalty to Dr. Schlesinger and also to (CIA Director) Bill Colby." William Colby also was removed from office.

Graham said Schlesinger "took me out to the CIA" when Schlesinger headed the intelligence agency in 1973 and later "he brought me into this job," as defense intelligence director.

Meanwhile, it was learned that assistant Secretary of Defense Robert Ellsworth is resigning. Sources said Ellsworth, who heads the Pentagon office dealing with international affairs, including arms sales, had decided to leave some weeks ago.

A number of other officials closely identified with Schlesinger are expected to quit soon after he vacates the office.

Graham said, "I was dumbfounded" when he heard Schlesinger was being fired. "I knew he had some tough fights over the military budget and he is very straightforward in the way he expresses himself," the general said. "But I had no idea he was in danger."

Graham avoided any criticism of President Ford or Secretary of State Henry A. Kissinger for Schlesinger's ouster.

There have been reports that Kissinger became enraged and blamed Graham and Schlesinger for leaking a study by a CIA analyst. It concluded that "for the Soviets, detente is intended to facilitate their attainment of ultimate, over-all dominance over the West."

Kissinger was said to feel the leak was intended to undermine his policy of detente. Asked if this leak got him into difficulty with Kissinger, Graham replied, "Not directly."

"Nobody jumped me on that at all," he said, acknowledging he made a mistake in allowing the study's distribution.

Asked how he felt about the substance of the study, Graham said, "I do agree with the thrust of it."